

Lavender Seniors of the East Bay

a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

Celebrating 30 years of outstanding service and positive change September 2024, Volume 30 Issue 9



September is a particularly active time for Elder Services at The Center as we prepare to transition into the Holidays and commence Pride season with the 14th anniversary of Oakland Pride. It seems like it was just yesterday that Lavender Seniors received the honor of riding in a cable car as Grand Marshal in the 2023 Pride Parade and festival and now this year's parade and festival is already upon us! Congratulations to all of the 2024 Grand Marshals including our friends at The Royal Grand Ducal Council of Alameda & Contra Costa Counties. The parade and festival start at 11:00am on Sunday September 8th and will feature plenty of accessible areas for seniors. For more information, please visit: https://www.oaklandpride.org/.

Latinx Heritage Month is also recognized during the month of September (9/15 - 10/15). Started in 1968 as a week, then turned month in 1988, Latinx Heritage Month provides us an opportunity to recognize the contributions and impact the Hispanic and Latinx community have had on our country. Our (very) special guest at September's Third Friday Lunch Bunch on 9/20 will be none other than, San Leandro City Councilmember (and former LSEB Board President), Victor Aguilar Jr. Get to know more about Victor in this month's issue of Lavender Notes and come say hello at September's Third Friday Lunch Bunch.

September's Social Seniors will take place on 9/27. Early RSVP is highly recommended as space is limited and this event will reach capacity. Thank you to our partners at The Watermark who continue to help us combat isolation and provide a safe environment for our LGBTQ+ seniors to socialize.

RSVP for September's Third Friday Lunch Bunch <u>HERE</u>

RSVP for September's Social Seniors **HERE**

The deadline to RSVP for both events is Tuesday 9/17.

In gratitude and love, Jessie R. Spivey, *Director of Elder Services*

Please click <u>here</u> to donate and support our seniors.



Elder Services was invited to participate in The Pacific Center's first annual, Berkeley Pride Resource Fair in August where The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center was honored alongside community partners and local organizations. CEO & Co-founder, Joe Hawkins is pictured here with Pacific Center ED, Lasara Firefox Allen and other award recipients.



August's Third Friday Lunch Bunch included Transportation focused presentations from Trevor Jacobson with Easy Does It, Andrea Mok with The City of Oakland and Chonita Chew with United Seniors of Alameda County.



Thank you to everyone that came out to enjoy August's Third Friday Lunch Bunch hosted at the North Oakland Senior Center.

Tribute to a Fallen Friend Richard Riffer

12/03/1939 - 07/09/2024

We are sad to report that one of our longterm Lavender Seniors participants passed away on July 9th in Berkeley. Richard Riffer (also known as Ruven ben Isidore – meaning "son of Isidore" in the Jewish tradition) was 84 years old.



He was the son of the late Molly and Edward Riffer, the brother of Harold Riffer of Paradise Valley, Arizona, the late Kenneth Riffer and his twin, the late, Eugene Riffer. He is survived by his brother, Harold, and nieces and nephews: Charlene, Ernie, Jody, Neil, Kathy Ray, Kay Julie and Ryder. As many of us know, he was the longtime companion of the late Jerome "Jerry" Fishman, who passed away in December 2018. Richard never quite recovered from that loss.



Richard between his beloved Jerry and good friend, Ed, Second Saturday, August 2014

Richard, Jerry and other close friends regularly attended Lavender Seniors events (e.g., Third Friday Lunch Bunch, Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch and Third Wednesday LGBTQ Film Series, as well as the organization's anniversary and fund-raising celebrations). You could see them at virtually every concert of the Oakland East Bay Gay Men's Chorus (now simply called the Oakland Gay Men's Chorus).

That was a particularly important organization in their lives, since it was at the 2000 inaugural performance of the OEBGMC (at a Lavender Seniors event!) that Richard and Jerry met, after which they were inseparable until Jerry's death 18+ years later.

Born in Chicago, Richard grew up in a traditional Jewish home in nearby Whiting, Indiana, where he played in the high school band and excelled in his studies. He attended Indiana University in Bloomington for his BS summa cum laude in Chemistry after receiving both Merit and Merck scholarships. One of his professors pronounced Richard to be the best chemistry student he had encountered in 11 years.

Next, he took the Santa Fe Railway to Berkeley and never left. He worked his way through graduate school and received an MS in 1963, and a PhD in 1967, in organic and biochemistry. Further studies followed at UC San Francisco Medical Center. The research he did for his dissertation was presented by his PhD committee chairman to the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm. Richard also led a cancer project credited with developing Tamoxifen, an effective treatment for breast cancer. This was followed by an air pollution study, as well as registering 2 patents.

He left UC when the air pollution study was moved because he did not want to leave Berkeley. He then joined private industry, becoming the Chief Chemist for C&H Sugar, where he and his team developed the flavor for Honey Nut Cheerios which many kids of all ages enjoy. Music, both playing and listening, brought him great pleasure. He played the cello, oboe, alto sax and recorder in bands, orchestras and chamber music groups for 50 years and regularly attended performances.

Described by family and friends as a "mensch", Richard was a kind man who was always willing to help. People close to him knew him as a loyal and reliable friend and neighbor who always showed up early for everything. He brought in the daily

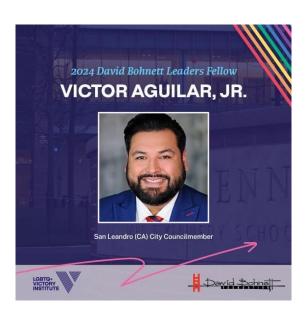
newspapers and recycling bins even when it became difficult. His endless curiosity and scientific precision made him highly-sought-after company. A few months prior to the scourge of Covid descending on our community, Richard made a well-received presentation at the Second Saturday Rainbow Lunch, educating fellow and sister seniors on anything they might not have known about nutrition from the standpoint of this highly-educated organic chemist!

He was a dedicated volunteer and an officer of Berkeley's ACLU chapter. He was very proud of his union membership. Richard remained ultra-sensitive to any hint of social or racial injustice.

A Memorial for Richard will be held at the Berkeley City Club, 2315 Durant, Berkeley, on Sunday September 15th from 11 am to 2 pm. May his memory be a blessing. Memorial donations are suggested to the ACLU, Southern Poverty Law Center and Hadassah.

LGBTQ+ Victory Fund Fellowship for Kennedy School

Former Lavender Seniors Board President Returns from Harvard



Long-time Lavender Seniors Board President, Victor Aguilar, Jr., has returned from Cambridge, MA, after having been selected by the LGBTQ+ Victory Institute for a David Bohnett Fellowship to attend June's Harvard Kennedy School Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program. These coveted fellowships provided seven candidates with a full-ride to the highly-acclaimed leadership training program, which is held at Harvard University in Cambridge.

Victor, who joined the Lavender Seniors board in October 2016, evolved from Interim Chair two months later to becoming Board President by the time the organization received its IRS 501(c)3 designation in 2017. He – and other board members – resigned their positions when Lavender Seniors transitioned to becoming a program of the Oakland LGBTQ+ Center in 2023.

In addition to his extensive role with Lavender Seniors, Victor's journey in public service and advocacy for the LGBTQ+ community is marked by many groundbreaking achievements and a steadfast commitment. He was the first openly gay person elected to the San Leandro Unified School District Board of Trustees and the San Leandro City Council. In addition, he has been a trailblazer representing LGBTQ+ interests within the political sphere, including being actively involved as a board member in the East Bay Stonewall Democratic Club.

His leadership roles extend beyond electoral politics, having served as Commission Chair for the San Leandro Human Services Commission and a significant contributor to the Alameda County Democratic Central Committee. He was President of the Alameda County Mosquito Abatement District Board of Trustees and is currently serving as immediate past president.

His influence is also felt on a national scale, with his appointment to the National League of Cities' Information Technology and Communication Federal Advocacy Committee. He is currently President of the National League of Cities LGBTQ+LO Constituency Group Board. In that capacity, he met with President Joe Biden at the 2024 National League of Cities Congressional City Conference in Washington, DC.

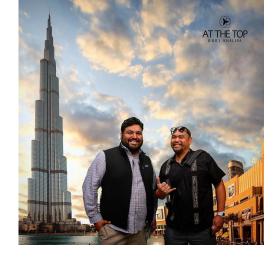


The fellowship aims to propel LGBTQ+ leaders into the next stage of their public service careers. Through leadership development, trainings and convenings, LGBTQ+ Victory Institute works to achieve and sustain global equality by increasing the number, expanding the diversity of and ensuring the success of out LGBTQ+ elected and appointed officials at all levels of government. For more information: https://victoryinstitute.org/news/seven-lgbtq-elected-leaders-chosen-for-prestigious-bohnett-fellowship-at-harvard-kennedy-school/.

Inspired by Harvard's approach to preparing politicians for public policy challenges, Victor is now considering applying at some point to one of Harvard's renowned Kennedy School master's programs in Public Policy or Public Administration.

"Of course, tuition costs alone would be prohibitive currently," Victor muses, "but I can dream, can't I? One of these days, my proverbial ship may come in – or perhaps another scholarship opportunity to make it possible one day."

Victor grew up in a Catholic family in El Monte, CA, where he and his dulcet first tenor voice first got involved in various traveling vocal ensembles. This talent provided him scholarship support as he finished his degree in Political Science at Hawaii Pacific University in 2003. In 2009, he met his husband, Nolan Quinabo, and they bought their San Leandro home together in 2013. (Of course, Victor soon became President of the Fioresta Neighborhood Association!) Victor and Nolan were married in 2017 after nearly eight years together. They continue to share their Fioresta neighborhood digs with their four-legged companions, Moana, Molly and Mimi.





Victor & Nolan, "engagement" trip, Dubai, February 2016

Christmas in Yosemite, December 2022

In addition to his many political and social activities, Victor is Account Executive with Construction Testing Services. Nolan continues his practice as a Certified Physical Therapist.

Congratulations, Victor! We understand that Nolan spent a lovely long weekend with you in Cambridge, so you enjoyed taking a well-earned break from leadership training!

Victor also just received a fellowship to a recently-held long-weekend workshop in El Segundo, held by WELL (Water Education for Latino Leaders), which is part of the UnTapped fellowship program. This organization offers spring and summer sessions for elected officials to become familiar with the state's water-location sites. This will help prepare politicos to advocate in Sacramento for water-related issues throughout California.

More details of Victor's personal, professional and political life can be found in his "Stories of Our Lives" newsletter profile in the Lavender Seniors archive from December 2016:

https://lavenderseniors.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/161201 LavNotes.pdf



Stories of Our Lives will return Oct 2024

If you are interested in being featured in Stories of Our Lives, please email: info@lavenderseniors.org



Join the Elder Services team!

Passionate about helping seniors? Being of service your calling? Want to work in an inclusive LGBTQ+ environment helping members of the LGBTQ+ community?

Please visit: https://www.oaklandlgbtqcenter.org/jobs for more info.



Call 4 Volunteers!



Exciting news! Rainbow Buddies (Formerly Friendly Visitor Program) has been in the works for some time now but we officially launched our Volunteer application for the program in May and we want to thank everyone who has been patient while we roll this process out. We continue to ask for your patience while we work through the relaunch and onboarding new staff simultaneously.

Elder Services is also in the early stages of partnering with another local organization to create a streamlined system for community members who want to volunteer in other capacities. We are currently seeking Volunteer support with the following:

- Stories of Our Lives
- Third Friday Lunch Bunch
- Social Seniors
- Support Group Facilitators (Training provided)

If you are interested in volunteering or



becoming a Rainbow Buddy, please visit:

https://lavenderseniors.org/rainbow-buddies/

For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavendersenior.org





September Activities

FREIGHT & SALVAGE



SEPTEMBER 1

LINDA TILLERY AND THE EAST BAY ALLSTARS CELEBRATING HER 76TH BIRTHDAY

WITH SPECIAL GUESTS:
RAY OBIEDO, TAMMY HALL, JEFF GOLDBERG,
KOFY BROWN, LEON JOYCE, JOHN SANTOS,
JACKIE RAGO, VICKI RANDLE, ZOE ELLIS,
TAMMI BROWN, GEORGE BROOKS, KRISTEN
STROM, MARINA GARZA, & JEFF CRESSMAN

GET TICKETS
THEFREIGHT.ORG

























Closing the Gap

Advancing Health Equity for LGBTQ+ Elders



Monday, September 9, 2024 12pm PT/3pm ET



Closing the Gap: Advancing Health Equity for LGBTQ+ Elders

Monday, September 9, 2024 12pm PT/3pm ET via Zoom RSVP here

Join us for an insightful panel discussion, sponsored by AARP, focused on health equity for LGBTQ+ elders, with a particular emphasis on the unique challenges faced by our most vulnerable community members. As these populations often experience heightened health challenges due to intersecting identities and systemic discrimination, our panel of experts will explore strategies to create more inclusive healthcare environments, address disparities, and ensure access to compassionate, culturally competent care.

Moderator: **<u>Dr. Jesse Ehrenfeld</u>**, immediate past president of the American Medical Association Panelists: Cartoonist **<u>Rupert Kinnard</u>** and trans health advocate **<u>Earline Budd</u>**

https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/outwords-webinars-216569



Sep 20

Bunch

We will be celebrating Latinx Heritage Month during September and our special guest at Third Friday Lunch Bunch will be San Leandro City Councilmember and former Lavender Seniors Board President, Victor Aguilar Jr.

Register

Free



Sep 27

Social Seniors September 2024

Join us for our monthly social for LGBTQ+ seniors hosted at The Watermark in Emeryville.

Free



Save the Date Thursday, September 26, 2024 for the 21st Annual

Healthy Living Festival

At the Oakland Zoo 9777 Golf Links Rd. Oakland, CA 94605 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM

This FREE event is reserved for Alameda County older adults (60+) and their guests.

REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED FOR EVERYONE

Fun, Friends, Resources, Physical Activities, **Nutritional Lunch, Great Music and More!**

Join us as we take collective action to improve the quality of life for seniors throughout Alameda County!

REGISTER AT **EVENTBRITE**

bit.ly/3Kj6CGb





For Sponsorship & Exhibitor questions: (510) 729-0852 Mary.USOAC@gmail.com

For Travel Training: (510) 729-0851 Chonita.USOAC@gmail.com

For Bus Reservations at large sites contact:

For Registration support contact: (510) 670-5964 Jasmine.Howard2@acgov.org

(510) 272-3691 Erin.Armstrong@acgov.org











Lavender Seniors Third Friday Lunch Bunch Friday September 20th @ 12:30pm In-person at The North Oakland Senior Center

A monthly luncheon for LGBTQ+ Seniors/Elders. A guest speaker or informative presentation is followed by a lunch provided for registered guests. FREE but RSVP is required to attend. For more info, please call 510-

882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Social Seniors

Friday September 27th @ 12:00pm

In-person at The Watermark Emeryville

A monthly social group for LGBTQ+ Seniors/Elders. A themed luncheon that usually includes music and/or performances. Lunch is provided for registered guests. FREE but RSVP is required to attend. For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Older & Out

Mondays in-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center SPONSORED BY: Pacific Center for Human Growth. For more info, please call 510-548-8283 or email: olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org. No dropins. Intake is required for attendance.

Bay Area Old Lesbians Organizing for Change (OLOC) Online and In-Person

For further information or to be included in the Bay Area OLOC email list, contact Pat Cull at patcull70@gmail.com or 415-637-5002.

Black Women Connect

Every 3rd Sunday @ 11:00am

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

This groups designed for Black Lesbian and Queer Women to connect, network, build community, have engaging conversations and authentically express themselves in a safe, inter-generational space. For inquiries or to RSVP, please email Dawn Edwards at ms.edwards73@gmail.com.

The Heart to Art Program

Next Cohort starts Fall 2024

Bi-weekly on Tuesdays 4:30pm - 6:30pm

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

A new art program for LGBTQ+ Seniors facilitated by local Artist Derrick Bell. No drop-ins, pre-registration is required. For more info or to be added to mailing list for next cohort, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

LGBTQIA+ Elders Therapy Group Wednesdays 1:00pm - 2:00pm

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

This group provides a therapeutic space in which LGBTQIA+ (includes questioning) older adults, age 55+, feel welcome to express their thoughts and feelings in an environment that is non-judgmental, inclusive and supportive. The group process works to reduce isolation, stigma and discrimination related to LGBTQIA+ identities, mental health issues and all the issues that affect each group members life. This group meets weekly for multi-week sessions. No Drop-ins. Pre-Registration is required to participate. For more info, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Trans Masc Affinity Support Group Every second Wednesday 7:00pm - 8:30pm In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

A monthly Affinity group for community members who identify as Trans Masculine only. For more info, please call 510-882-2286.

POSTPONED - Senior Gay Men's Affinity Group

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

A monthly Affinity group for Senior Gay Men ages 55+. Group start date and facilitator TBA. For more info or to be added to the mailing list, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

POSTPONED - Senior Lesbian Women's Affinity Group

In-person at The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

A monthly Affinity group for Senior Lesbian Women ages 55+. Group start date and facilitator TBA. For more info or to be added to the mailing list, please call 510-882-2286 or email: info@lavenderseniors.org.

Older & Out

Fridays in-person at The North Berkeley Senior Center

SPONSORED BY: Pacific Center for Human Growth. For more info, please call 510-548-8283 or email: olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org. No dropins. Intake is required for attendance.

Older & Out via Zoom

Tuesdays online

SPONSORED BY: Pacific Center for Human Growth. For more info, please call 510-548-8283 or email: olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org. No dropins. Intake is required for attendance.

Older & Out Social

1st Thursdays 1:00pm - 3:00pm

In-person at The North Berkeley Senior Center

SPONSORED BY: Pacific Center for Human Growth with support from North Berkeley Senior Center. For more info, please call Keith, 510-685-7691 or email: kcarroll@lmi.net.

Older & Out Social via Zoom

Second Wednesdays 4:00pm - 5:00pm

In-person at The North Berkeley Senior Center

SPONSORED BY: Pacific Center for Human Growth. For more info, please call 510-548-8283 or email: olderandoutgroups@pacificcenter.org.

Rainbow Seniors

2nd & 4th Tuesdays 12:30pm - 2:00pm

In-person at The San Leandro Senior Center

Rainbow Seniors LGBTQ Peer Support Group is a safe & confidential space for LGBTQ seniors (50+) to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information & to support one another. It is a peer support group, facilitated by trained peers. For more info and to join email: rainbowseniors@pacificcenter.org.

Tri-Valley Rainbows

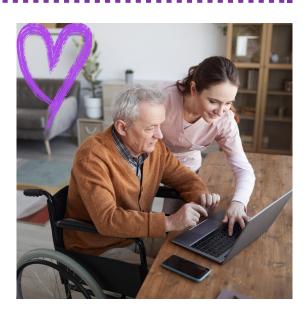
3rd Thursdays 5:30pm-7:30pm via Zoom

Tri-Valley Rainbows is a safe & confidential peer support group for LGBTQIA+ older adults age 50+ to share thoughts, feelings, resources, information & to

support one another. It is a drop-in peer group, facilitated by trained peers. For more info + link to join email: trivalleyrainbows@pacificcenter.org.

Resource Hub





Sign up for Direct Services

The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center's Elder Service Program is now offering Direct Services and Case Management. The Center's Elder Services promotes a positive and healthy quality of life for senior and elder LGBTQ+ individuals 55+ by ensuring they continue to be supported, respected, and connected as they advance in age. We collaborate with existing agencies working with LGBTQ+ seniors to connect people to needed resources and work to identify gaps in services so that we can find ways to fill those gaps. We also host support groups and activities designed to help keep LGBTQ+ seniors and elders engaged with other elders and younger members of our community.

The Center's Elder Services Program participants also have access to other Center services to include:

- Transportation Assistance*
- Food Pantry
- Emergency Rental Assistance*
- Mental Health Subsidies*
- HIV/STI testing and treatment
- PEP/PrEP enrollment
- Benefits Enrollment
- Linkage to Primary Care
- Care Management & Service Coordination Assistance

^{*}rental/transportation assistance and other subsidies are limited and provided to qualified enrolled program participants as they become available.

To get enrolled and connected to our Program for direct services and case management, please click the button above. For more info, please call call 510-882-2286.





The Center's Food Pantry Is Open Monday thru Friday, 1pm-4pm

Please call 510-882-2286 for more information.





A recovery meeting for LGBTQIA+ Black, Indigenous, and People of Color.

Mondays 7pm - 8:15pm Starting May 15th at the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center

This is a discussion meeting with different topics read each week.

For information contact
The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center
Call 1(510) 882-2286 or visit their website at





Every Tuesday @ 7pm



City of Oakland Senior Centers

Four senior centers are located throughout the City of Oakland and managed by the City's Human Services Department - Aging & Adult Services Division. Senior centers provide social, recreational, nutritional and educational activities to older adults in our community.

https://www.oaklandca.gov/resources/senior-centers

Downtown Oakland (DOSC)

200 Grand Ave | Oakland, CA 94610 (510) 238-3284 | DOSC@oaklandca.gov

East Oakland (EOSC)

9255 Edes Street | Oakland, CA 94603 (510) 615-5731 | EOSC@oaklandca.gov

North Oakland (NOSC)

5714 Martin Luther King, Jr. Way | Oakland, CA 94609

(510) 597-5085 | NOSC@oaklandca.gov

West Oakland (WOSC)

1724 Adeline St | Oakland, CA 94607 (510) 238-7016 | WOSC@oaklandca.gov

Pacific Center for Human Growth

Founded in 1973, Pacific Center for Human Growth is the oldest LGBTQIA+ center in the Bay Area, the third oldest in the nation, and operates the only sliding scale mental health clinic for LGBTQIA+ and QTBIPOC people and their families in Alameda County.

https://www.pacificcenter.org/ 2130 Center St Suite 200 | Berkeley, CA 94704 (510) 548-8283 | info@pacificcenter.org

Rainbow Community Center

The Rainbow Community Center of Contra Costa County started in 1995 and continues to envision a society that embraces acceptance, safety and equality for all, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

https://www.rainbowcc.org/ 2380 Salvio Street, Suite 301 | Concord, CA 94520 (925) 692-0090 | rcc@rainbowcc.org

Community Phone Calls

This award-winning program offers activities, education, support groups, and friendly conversation over the phone or online.

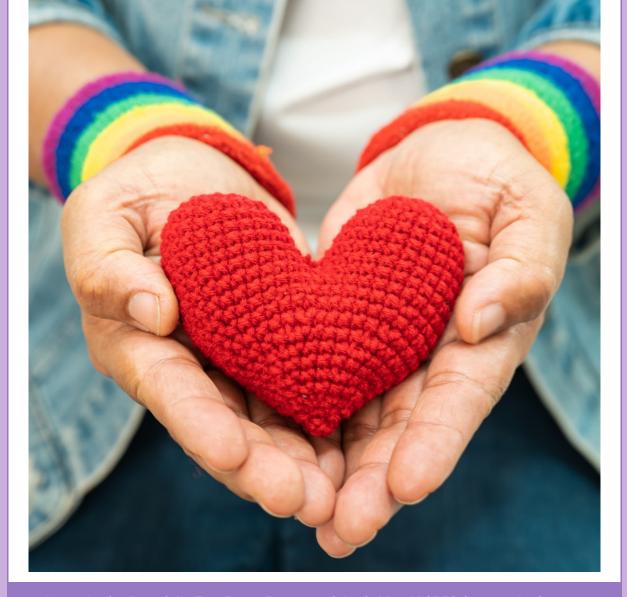
View the Current catalog of community phone calls <u>here</u>. Check the website for more information. To participate in these or other Well Connected telephone activities, or to learn more about their programs, call 877-797-7299 or email <u>coviaconnections@covia.org</u>.

Friendly Voices Phone Buddies for Seniors

Our mission is to create a vital human connection for isolated seniors through weekly phone conversations with trained, compassionate volunteers.

Sign up here or call (650) 395-8017

https://friendlyvoices.org/



Lavender Seniors of the East Bay, a Program of the Oakland LGBTQ Community Center



Mailing Address: 490 Lake Park Ave. #10530, Oakland, CA 94610-8019

Donations:

Please make all checks payable to "The Oakland LGBTQ Center" and include "Lavender Seniors" in the memo section

510-882-2286

info@lavenderseniors.org
http://www.lavenderseniors.org
http://www.oaklandlgbtqcenter.org

Contact Donate

Lavender Seniors | The Oakland LGBTQ Community Center 3207 Lakeshore Avenue | Oakland, CA 94610-8019 US

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